DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 118 841 CE 006 384

AUTHOR Clemmons, Jesse Stuart
TITLE Roles and Objectives of State Research Coordinating Units as Perceived by RCU Directors and State Directors of Vocational Education. [Summary].
INSTITUTION North Carolina State Dept. of Public Instruction, Raleigh. Occupational Research Unit.
PUB DATE 17 Mar 75
NOTE 26p.; For the complete study, see CE 006 385. Report presented at the National Conference of Research Coordinating Unit Personnel (Denver, Colorado, March 17, 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Attitudes; *Agency Role; Doctoral Theses; Educational Administration; Educational Finance; Educational Research; Objectives; Questionnaires; *Research Coordinating Units; State Agencies; Tables (Data); *Vocational Directors; *Vocational Education

ABSTRACT

The summary describes a study comparing the perceptions of Research Coordinating Unit Directors (RCUDs) at various administrative levels and State Directors of Vocational Education (SDVEs) regarding the roles and objectives of the RCUs in the various States. Roughly 90% of the respective samples responded to mailed questionnaires. The data demonstrate that: many RCUs had been administratively relocated since 1966, mostly to within the State Departments of Education (SDEs); RCUs outside the SDE had larger staffs and more experienced directors; more than half of all RCUs administered the State share of exemplary funds; most of the RCUs administering funds from the Educational Professions Development Act were located outside the SDE; RCUDs and SDVEs agreed on the role they perceived and projected for RCUs in various administrative relationships with the SDE; both RCUDs and SDVEs projected and perceived identical roles for RCUs administratively located outside the SDE; both RCUDs and SDVEs projected greater levels of role responsibility than they perceived were occurring for RCUs administratively located within the SDE; and RCUDs and SDVEs assigned relatively equal ranks to a list of 15 RCU objectives. (JR)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED118841

FEB 05 1976

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ROLES AND OBJECTIVES OF STATE RESEARCH COORDINATING UNITS AS PERCEIVED BY RCU DIRECTORS AND STATE DIRECTORS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Jesse S. Clemmons

The Occupational Research Unit
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Raleigh, N. C.

Presented at the
National Conference of Research Coordinating Unit Personnel
Denver, Colorado
March 17, 1975

CE006884

ROLES AND OBJECTIVES OF STATE RESEARCH COORDINATING UNITS AS PERCEIVED BY RCU DIRECTORS AND STATE DIRECTORS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The Vocational Education Act of 1963 (P. L. 88-210) was the first federal legislation to authorize a significant amount of funds to be expended categorically for research and training efforts in vocational education. The Act authorized that 10 percent of the federal operating funds for vocational education be set aside for research efforts.

Francis Keppel, then U. S. Commissioner of Education, sent a memorandum dated April 9, 1965, to chief state school officers, executive officers of state boards of education, and State Directors of Vocational Education (SDVEs), inviting state departments of education (SDEs) and universities in each state to submit proposals for establishment of state Research Coordinating Units (RCUs). The call from Commissioner Keppel for establishing RCUs represented an attempt to meet the criticisms voiced in congressional hearings on P. L. 88-210. One of the major criticisms was that research in vocational education was sporadic, uncoordinated, and directed chiefly toward program operations.

The invitation to submit proposals brought a response from 24 states in 1965 and 20 states in 1966. In 1969, Goldhammer, et al.[1] identified 26 Units administered through SDEs, 14 through universities, and four through combinations of SDEs and universities or foundations. Subsequently, the remainder of the 50 states, plus Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands, American Samoa, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, and Washington, D. C., established RCUs.

---

[1] Goldhammer, Keith, et al. Research Coordinating Unit Program Evaluation, Center for Educational Research and Service, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon, 1969.

NEED FOR STUDY

The only original guidelines concerning the establishment and operation of RCUs were the typically broad statements of intent in the 1963 Act and a set of equally vague "guideline" objectives contained in Commissioner Keppel's call for proposals in 1965. The Act spoke only of ". . . research and training programs and . . . experimental, developmental, or pilot programs . . ." while Commissioner Keppel's letter specified only eight broadly stated objectives related to the areas of dissemination, program planning, the change process, research coordination, statistical reporting to the Office of Education, and stimulation of research training efforts.

The 1968 Vocational Education Amendments Act (P. L. 90-576) spelled out the role of the RCUs only slightly better by specifying several broad areas of concern. These were (1) research in vocational education, (2) research training programs, (3) projects designed to test the effectiveness of research findings, (4) demonstration and dissemination projects, (5) development of new vocational curriculua, and (6) projects in the development of new careers and occupations.

From these general mandates RCUs have developed into a diverse group of organizations whose activities fit roughly into the categories of research, development, technical assistance, and dissemination. The amount of emphasis placed on each activity depends upon the philosophy and role delineation perceived by the individual RCU. Some RCUs operate rather autonomously, doing research-type activities in a university setting, while others operate rather pragmatically performing technical assistance activities in a SDE setting.

It is difficult to describe overall roles and objectives of RCUs. Consequently, it is equally difficult for an individual RCU to gain perspective on its roles and objectives as it prepares to formulate annual and long-range plans of action. Admittedly, each RCU must operate within its individual context of constraints and resources. It would, however, be helpful for each RCU to be familiar with the roles and objectives of RCUs in similar settings.

The U. S. Office of Education and the National Institute of Education also have a need to understand and describe adequately the roles and objectives of the various RCUs in order to conceptualize and provide leadership to the vocational research and development program in the United States.

In addition, RCUs have developed roles of varying relationships with SDVEs. Depending on the philosophy of the individual state, the Units have developed roles ranging from being on the SDVE's staff, controlled by him, to being located out of the SDE operating practically autonomously from the SDVE. Specific examples of both types can be identified as "good" RCUs.

A need that is developing, both nationally and state-by-state, is to describe accurately the roles and objectives of the RCUs as seen by Research Coordinating Unit Directors (RCUDs). Additionally, the SDVEs' perceptions of the roles and objectives of RCUs and their degree of congruence with the RCUDs' perceptions of RCU roles and objectives need to be determined.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The general research objective was to describe the roles and objectives of the various RCUs as perceived by RCUDs operating in various administrative settings and compare these perceptions with those of SDVEs regarding the roles and objectives of RCUs.

More specifically, the study proposed to:

1. Describe the major roles and objectives of RCUs as perceived and projected by RCUDs,
2. Describe the major roles and objectives of RCUs as perceived and projected by SDVEs, and
3. Compare and contrast the perceived and projected roles and objectives of RCUs held by RCUDs and SDVEs within similar administrative settings.

DATA COLLECTION

The data collection instrument resulted from a review of the literature, formal and informal interviews and discussions with various RCUDs, and personal experience in a state RCU. It was composed of four sections, or categories, of questions.

The first section (included on only the RCUD instrument) was designed to collect descriptive data concerning RCUs. It covered the areas of size of RCU staff, funding sources, administrative location, tenure of the RCUD, and distribution of funds between RCU operational costs and the funding of grants and contracts.

The second section was designed to elicit opinions of RCUDs and SDVEs as to the major objectives of their state's RCU. The section was extracted from the instrument used in the 1969 Goldhammer et al. study of RCUs. Inclusion of the section in its original form provided a

longitudinal description of changes in the focus of RCUs.

The last section was designed to identify the role of RCUs as perceived and projected by RCUDs and SDVEs. RCUDs and SDVEs indicated the degree of RCU involvement by using a seven-point scale to rate 54 role statements.

The instrument, with an accompanying cover letter, was mailed to RCUDs and SDVEs in the 50 states on August 30, 1974. Three days later, on September 2, 1974, a follow-up postcard was mailed to the RCUDs and SDVEs urging them to respond to the instrument as soon as possible. Two weeks later, on September 13, 1974, a follow-up letter with an additional instrument enclosed was mailed to all non-respondents. During the week of September 25, telephone calls were placed to the few RCUDs and SDVEs who had not responded, encouraging them to complete and mail the questionnaire as soon as possible. The procedure resulted in an overall response rate of 92.0% for RCUDs and 88.0% for SDVEs.

FINDINGS

Descriptive Data

Many of the RCUs had been administratively relocated since 1966. Table 1 presents the number of RCUs administratively located outside or within the SDE during 1966 and 1974.

Table 1. Number and percent of RCUs by administrative location in 1966 and 1974.

Location	1966		1974	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Outside SDE	19	43%	7	14%
Within SDE	25	57%	43	86%
Total	44		50	

The 44 RCUs in operation during 1966 were close to evenly divided by administrative location within and outside the SDE. However, by 1974 a large majority (86%) of the RCUs were administratively located within the SDE.

In addition, RCUs had structured themselves differently depending on administrative location of the Unit. Table 2 describes the personnel arrangements of RCUs by administrative location.

Table 2. Descriptive summary of RCUs by administrative location.

Variable	Location I[a]	Location II[b]	Location III[c]	Total
Mean number of full-time staff	5.1	3.4	3.2	3.6
Mean number of full-time equivalent staff	7.5	3.9	3.6	4.4
Mean RCUD tenure (years)	4.3	2.8	3.3	3.2

[a] Outside SDE.
[b] Within SDE, administratively responsible to SDVE.
[c] Within SDE, administratively responsible to a position other than SDVE.

As a group, RCUs averaged 3.6 full-time staff members. RCUs within the SDE (both those administratively responsible to the SDVE and those administratively responsible to a position other than the SDVE) had about equal average numbers of full-time staff (3.4 and 3.2, respectively) while RCUs located outside the SDE had, on the average, larger numbers of full-time staff positions. Full-time equivalent staff figures revealed the same general profile. Location I RCUs averaged 7.5 full-time equivalent staff members while those in Locations II and III averaged 3.9 and 3.6, respectively. RCUD tenure patterns were also different by administrative

location of the RCU. The data revealed that RCUDs outside the SDE had an average tenure of 4.3 years while those within the SDE in Locations II and III had average tenures of 2.8 and 3.3 years, respectively.

Table 3 describes funding sources utilized by RCUs by administrative location.

Table 3. Percent of RCUs by various funding sources utilized by administrative location.

Funding Source	Location I[a]	Location II[b]	Location III[c]	Total
1968 VEA, Part C (131b)	100%	100%	100%	100%
1968 VEA, Part D (142d)	57%	58%	46%	55%
EPDA, Section 552	70%	8%	8%	18%
EPDA, Section 553	70%	16%	8%	23%

[a]Outside SDE.
[b]Within SDE, administratively responsible to SDVE.
[c]Within SDE, administratively responsible to a position other than SDVE.

As would be expected, all RCUs reported they administered the state share of Part C research funds of P. L. 90-576. In addition, an average 55% of those responding indicated they administered the state share of Part D funds. A slightly lower percentage (46%) of RCUs in Location III indicated they administered Part D funds as compared with RCUs in Locations I and II (57% and 58%, respectively.)

The majority of RCUs which administered funds of EPDA, Section 552, were in Location I. Seventy percent of those RCUs indicated they administered 552 funds while 8% of the RCUs in Locations II and III indicated administrative involvement. EPDA, Section 553, followed the same pattern. These funds were administered by 70% of the RCUs in Location I, 16% of the RCUs in Location II, and 8% of the RCUs in Location III.

Role of RCUs

The 54 statements concerning perceived and projected role of RCUs were collapsed into 10 "role categories." The 10 role categories were identified as (1) technical assistance, (2) RCU conducted research and evaluation (R & E), (3) dissemination, (4) curriculum development, (5) training research personnel, (6) state plan, (7) Exemplary project administration, (8) Research project administration, (9) management information system, and (10) reporting clearinghouse. Table 4 indicates the number of statements combined as well as the mean for each role category for both RCUDs and SDVEs.

Table 4. Summary of statements by RCUDs and SDVEs combined to derive estimates of perceived and projected role of RCUs.

		RCUD		SDVE	
Role Category	Number of Statements	Mean Perceived	Mean Projected	Mean Perceived	Mean Projected
Technical Assistance	4	3.75	4.52	3.71	4.25
RCU Conducted R & E	6	3.37	4.21	2.98	3.87
Dissemination	5	3.90	5.16	3.99	5.18
Curriculum Development	5	3.21	3.96	3.02	3.84
Training Res. Personnel	4	2.73	4.44	2.61	3.97
State Plan	4	3.88	4.34	3.60	3.94
Exemplary Project Adm.	9	3.87	4.76	3.86	4.74
Research Project Adm.	9	5.15	5.87	4.86	5.60
Managment Inf. System	6	3.99	4.55	3.72	4.61
Reporting Clearinghouse	2	5.10	5.40	4.28	5.03

For every role category both RCUDs and SDVEs projected a greater level of role responsibility for RCUs than they perceived was occurring. The data indicated that both RCUDs and SDVEs perceived the greatest level of RCU role responsibility to be research project administration. Likewise, both groups agreed in that they perceived training research personnel to be the least level of responsibility of RCUs.

When asked to project levels of role responsibility for RCUs, both RCUDs and SDVEs indicated research project administration to be the greatest level and curriculum development to be the least level of RCU role responsibility.

At first glance it appeared that RCUDs and SDVEs agreed, in general, on the role responsibilities of RCUs. However, analysis of the data by administrative location of the RCUs revealed a different pciture. The results of that analysis begin in Table 5.

Table 5. Mean perceived role by RCUDs and SDVEs for RCUs by administrative location.

Role Category	Location I[a]			Location II[b]			Location III[c]		
	RCUD	SDVE	t	RCUD	SDVE	t	RCUD	SDVE	t
Technical Assistance	5.50	4.79	1.05	3.44	3.52	.34	3.38	3.15	.75
RCU Conducted R & E	3.81	3.47	.63	3.20	2.86	1.53	3.03	2.82	.60
Dissemination	4.63	5.30	1.57	3.55	3.74	.68	3.58	3.84	.63
Curriculum Development	3.57	3.40	.49	3.26	3.07	.73	2.76	2.44	.52
Training Res. Personnel	5.13	3.83	1.50	2.14	2.32	.63	2.38	2.48	.14
State Plan	3.21	3.13	.21	4.41	4.28	.68	2.75	1.95	2.39*
Exemplary Project Adm.	2.61	3.11	1.15	4.16	4.26	.39	3.31	3.31	.00
Research Project Adm.	4.44	4.35	.19	5.21	5.12	.34	5.12	4.60	1.34
Management Info. System	4.78	4.39	.69	3.55	3.77	.62	4.03	3.00	2.39*
Reporting Clearinghouse	4.83	4.42	.68	5.34	4.43	2.29*	4.70	3.70	1.68
	n = 6			n = 22			n = 10		

*Significant at .05 level by Student's t for paired variants.

[a]Outside SDE.

[b]Within SDE, administratively responsible to SDVE.

[c]Within SDE, administratively responsible to a position other than SDVE.

Data presented in Table 5 indicated general agreement by RCUDs and SDVEs on the role they perceived for RCUs. In Location I no significant differences occurred on any of the role categories. In Location II there was one significant difference, and in Location III there were two significant differences. There appeared to be a consensus of perceived role for RCUs by RCUDs and SDVEs within each of the three administrative locations.

Comparisons were also made to determine agreement of RCUDs and SDVEs on projected role for RCUs within each administrative location. Table 6 presents the results of that analysis.

Table 6. Mean projected role by RCUDs and SDVEs for RCUs by administrative location.

Role Category	Location I[a]			Location II[b]			Location III[c]		
	RCUD	SDVE	t	RCUD	SDVE	t	RCUD	SDVE	t
Technical Assistance	5.79	4.71	1.45	4.36	4.22	.51	4.30	3.83	1.28
RCU Conducted R & E	4.47	3.89	.84	4.23	3.95	1.07	3.77	3.55	.67
Dissemination	5.40	5.53	.47	4.98	5.01	.19	5.10	5.54	.89
Curriculum Development	4.00	3.60	1.02	4.09	4.01	.22	3.58	3.38	.27
Training Res. Personnel	5.38	4.50	.92	4.15	3.78	1.05	4.30	4.30	.00
State Plan	3.50	3.42	.18	4.73	4.47	1.02	3.55	2.75	2.53*
Exemplary Project Adm.	3.69	3.33	.48	5.03	5.25	.62	4.42	4.43	.02
Research Project Adm.	5.24	4.69	1.75	6.01	5.96	.32	5.88	5.48	2.14
Management Info. System	4.42	4.69	.32	4.63	4.68	.14	4.27	4.37	.14
Reporting Clearinghouse	4.75	5.17	.36	5.30	4.91	1.03	5.55	5.20	.72
	n = 6			n = 22			n = 10		

*Significant at .05 level by Student's t for paired variants.

[a]Outside SDE.

[b]Within SDE, administratively responsible to SDVE.

[c]Within SDE, administratively responsible to a position other than SDVE.

Data in Table 6 indicated almost complete agreement by RCUDs and SDVEs on projected role of RCUs within each of the three administrative locations. No significant differences were detected in Locations I and II while one significant difference occurred in Location III. In short, RCUDs and SDVEs projected very similar role responsibilities for RCUs in each administrative location.

Table 7 presents data that compared perceived and projected roles for RCUs by RCUDs in each administrative location.

Table 7. Mean perceived and projected role by RCUDs for RCUs by administrative location.

Role Category	Location I[a]			Location II[b]			Location III[c]		
	Perceived	Projected	t	Perceived	Projected	t	Perceived	Projected	t
Technical Assistance	5.14	5.39	.79	3.57	4.43	4.24**	3.33	4.21	4.05**
RCU Conducted R & E	3.67	4.24	1.91	3.29	4.30	4.76**	3.36	4.04	3.43**
Dissemination	4.66	5.43	3.82**	3.60	5.02	5.24**	4.03	5.28	3.91**
Curriculum Development	3.57	3.94	2.24	3.27	4.06	3.69**	2.92	3.78	4.32**
Training Res. Personnel	4.89	5.11	1.00	2.26	4.23	5.67**	2.38	4.44	6.83**
State Plan	3.21	3.46	1.53	4.37	4.67	1.59	3.38	4.21	3.61**
Exemplary Project Adm.	2.71	3.67	1.57	4.26	5.11	3.36**	3.81	4.72	3.10**
Research Project Adm.	4.63	5.32	1.95	5.27	6.05	5.34**	5.21	5.86	2.57*
Management Inf. System	4.62	4.31	1.41	3.64	4.67	2.41*	4.26	4.47	.61
Reporting Clearinghouse	4.64	4.64	.00	5.41	5.37	.19	4.81	5.85	2.58*
	n = 7			n = 23			n = 13		

*Significant at .05 level by Student's t for paired variants.
**Significant at .01 level by Student's t for paired variants.
[a]Outside SDE.
[b]Within SDE, administratively responsible to SDVE.
[c]Within SDE, administratively responsible to a position other than SDVE.

Data in Table 7 indicated that RCUDs in Location I projected a role for their RCUs very similar to what they perceived it to be. However, RCUDs in Locations II and III projected a much greater level of role responsibility for their RCUs. Statistically significant differences were found for one role category in Location I whereas in Locations II and III eight and nine significant differences were found, respectively.

Further analysis compared perceived and projected RCU roles by SDVEs in each of the administrative locations. Table 8 presents the results.

Table 8. Mean perceived and projected role by SDVEs for RCUs by administrative location.

Role Category	Location I[a]			Location II[b]			Location III[c]		
	Perceived	Projected	t	Perceived	Projected	t	Perceived	Projected	t
Technical Assistance	4.79	4.71	.79	3.67	4.31	3.97**	3.15	3.83	3.69**
RCU Conducted R & E	3.47	3.89	2.03	2.93	4.00	5.60**	2.82	3.55	2.34*
Dissemination	5.30	5.53	1.56	3.73	4.93	5.00**	3.84	5.54	3.74**
Curriculum Development	3.40	3.60	1.58	3.17	4.09	4.57**	2.44	3.38	3.22*
Training Res. Personnel	3.83	4.50	1.30	2.35	3.70	4.08**	2.48	4.30	5.13**
State Plan	3.13	3.42	1.19	4.41	4.57	.88	1.95	2.75	3.40**
Exemplary Project Adm.	3.11	3.33	1.27	4.27	5.21	4.04**	3.31	4.43	3.96**
Research Project Adm.	4.35	4.69	2.05	5.09	5.88	3.94**	4.60	5.48	2.90**
Management Info. System	4.39	4.69	.68	3.85	4.69	3.15**	3.00	4.37	4.07**
Reporting Clearinghouse	4.42	5.17	1.00	4.48	4.92	2.01	3.70	5.20	2.90
	n = 6			n = 24			n = 10		

*Significant at .05 level by Student's t for paired variants.
**Significant at .01 level by Student's t for paired variants.
[a]Outside SDE.
[b]Within SDE, administratively responsible to SDVE.
[c]Within SDE, administratively responsible to a position other than SDVE.

Table 8 indicated a pattern for SDVEs very similar to that for RCUDs. SDVEs' perceived and projected RCU roles were similar in Location I and vastly different in Locations II and III. The analysis detected no significant differences in Location I, eight significant differences in Location II, and 10 significant differences in Location III.

Objectives of RCUs

Another part of the study examined major objectives of RCUs. The list of 15 objectives developed by Goldhammer in 1969 was used to provide a comparison over time. In the present study, as in the 1969 Goldhammer study, RCUDs and SDVEs were asked to assign priorities to each objective. Table 9 indicates the rank assigned to each objective by each group.

Table 9. RCU objectives as ranked by RCUDs and SDVEs.

Rank by RCUDs	Rank by SDVEs	Objective
6	5	To disseminate information on progress and application of occupational research.
2	4	To survey available data on employment opportunities, occupational trends and future job projects for use in planning vocational programs, curricula, facilities, teacher training, recruitment and placement in the state.
15	15	To create change in the administration of local vocational education programs.
14	11	To coordinate occupational education research activities conducted within the state with those being conducted outside the state.
3	2.5	To coordinate occupational education research activities conducted by state departments, local school districts, colleges and universities,and nonprofit organizations.
13	12	To act as a clearing house for all Federal financial and other statistical reports relating to expenditure (accounting) of Federal funds and program enrollments, etc.
12	8	To identify and maintain an inventory of available occupational research and development resources in the state.
9	13	To stimulate activities, including pre-service and in-service training which would result in increased interest and improved competence in research.
8	8	To serve as a statistical research reporting service for the state department of education.
4	6	To review and monitor occupational research and developmental projects.
1	1	To stimulate and encourage occupational education research and development activities in state departments, local school districts, colleges and universities, and nonprofit organizations.
7	10	To conduct occupational research and development projects.
10	8	To initiate research projects through involvement of RCU staff in proposal-writing.
5	2.5	To determine occupational research needed to resolve the major vocational education issues and problems.
11	14	To identify issues and problems relating to the nature and place of vocational education in the state school system.

Data presented in Table 9 indicated much similarity between rankings assigned the 15 objectives by RCUDs and SDVEs. Both groups assigned highest rank to the objective dealing with stimulation and encouragement of R & D in all areas. However, the objectives assigned highest rank failed to indicate a single area of concentration but rather seemed to reflect a diversity of RCU undertakings. Other high-ranked objectives pertained to surveying manpower data and coordination of in-state research efforts.

The study also compared ratings of RCU objectives by RCUDs in 1969 and 1974. Table 10 lists those objectives for which differences in ratings were detected.

Table 10. RCU objectives which received significantly different ratings of mean importance by RCUDs in 1969 and 1974.

Objective	Significant Increase/Decrease in Importance Between 1969 and 1974
° To disseminate information on progress and application of occupational research.	Decrease
° To review and monitor occupational research and development projects.	Increase
° To identify issues and problems relating to the nature and place of vocational education in the state school system.	Increase

Table 10 presents data which indicated a significant change in three RCU objectives between 1969 and 1974 according to RCUDs. RCUDs assigned significantly less importance to the objective dealing with dissemination and significantly greater importance to objectives pertaining to reviewing and monitoring R & D projects and identifying issues and problems relating

to vocational education.

Table 11 presents a listing of objectives assigned significantly different ratings in 1969 and 1974 by SDVEs.

Table 11. RCU objectives which received significantly different ratings of mean importance by SDVEs in 1969 and 1974.

Objective	Significant Increase/Decrease in Importance Between 1969 and 1974
° To coordinate occupational education research activities conducted within the state with those being conducted outside the state.	Decrease
° To coordinate occupational education research activities conducted by state departments, local school districts, colleges and universities, and nonprofit organizations.	Increase
° To act as a clearing house for all Federal financial and other statistical reports relating to expenditure (accounting) of Federal funds and program enrollments, etc.	Increase
° To conduct occupational research and development projects.	Decrease
° To determine occupational research needed to resolve the major vocational education issues and problems.	Increase

Data in Table 11 indicated SDVEs assigned significantly different ratings to five objectives in 1974 when compared to their ratings in 1969. SDVEs assigned significantly greater ratings to objectives dealing with coordination of in-state research, federal reporting, and determining research needs. They assigned significantly lower ratings to objectives dealing with coordination with out-of-state research and conducting R & D projects.

Highlights of Findings

1. Many RCUs had been administratively relocated since 1966. In 1966, 57% of RCUs were within SDEs while in 1974, 86% were within SDEs.

2. RCUs outside the SDE had larger staffs and Directors with more years experience.

3. More than half of all RCUs administered the state share of Exemplary funds.

4. Most of the RCUs which administered funds from EPDA, Sections 552 and 553, were located outside the SDE.

5. RCUDs and SDVEs agreed on the role they perceived for RCUs in each of the three administrative locations.

6. RCUDs and SDVEs agreed on the role they projected for RCUs in each of the three administrative locations.

7. Both RCUDs and SDVEs projected a role no different than they perceived for RCUs administratively located outside the SDE.

8. Both RCUDs and SDVEs projected greater levels of role responsibility than they perceived were actually occurring for RCUs administratively located within the SDE -- both those responsible to the SDVE and those responsible to a position other than the SDVE.

9. RCUDs and SDVEs assigned relatively equal ranks to a list of 15 RCU objectives.

10. Between 1969 and 1974 RCUDs assigned different ratings of mean importance to three objectives, and SDVEs assigned different ratings of mean importance to five objectives from a list of 15.

DISCUSSION

Possible implications of the study are far-reaching and have potentially different meanings for different audiences. However, there are implications for RCUDs and their staffs, for SDVEs and their staffs, and for those agencies concerned with coordination of vocational education research efforts among the states.

From the data it was apparent that either SDVEs were satisfied with the performance of RCUs outside the SDE and therefore projected no change in their role, or SDVEs were dissatisfied with the performance of RCUs outside the SDE and would discourage any increased level of involvement on their part. The data implied that the latter is true in that many RCUs had been moved into the administrative structure of the SDE, and a majority of those were administratively responsible to the SDVEs. However, it is just as possible that only the most viable RCUs avoided administrative relocation to the SDE because they were providing stronger research leadership than their counterparts in other administrative locations.

The data also implied a variety of objectives had been embraced by the RCUs. The data did not prove but suggested that, even within similar administrative locations, objectives of RCUs varied from state to state.

If SDVEs and RCUDs have their way, RCUs within the administrative structure of the SDE apparently face more intensive role responsibilities (even though those RCUs had smaller staffs and a smaller variety of funding sources).

As with most research this study has raised as many questions as it has answered. There is a definite need for more study of the roles and

objectives of RCUs. Not the least of these is a follow-up of this study several years hence. The 1969 Goldhammer study provided baseline information upon which this study was conceived. This study could just as well provide the basis for other studies. Longitudinal studies profiling the changing nature of RCUs would provide valuable historical as well as program management data for the USOE and for individual RCUs.

The instruments developed in the study could assist an individual RCU in assessing role perceptions held by client groups within its service area. The results could provide information relevant to efforts in public relations, information, and program planning.

It was concluded that SDVEs projected no change in degree of responsibility for RCUs outside the SDE. Further research is needed to determine if that attitude is correlated with SDVEs' satisfaction with the performance of those RCUs. The results of such a study would have direct bearing on relating future program efforts of RCUs outside and within the SDE.

The study compared perceived and projected roles for RCUs held by RCUDs and SDVEs and provided implication of one component of "client satisfaction." However, that particular aspect was not directly addressed in the study. Further research is needed to determine how satisfied both RCUDs and SDVEs are with the performance of RCUs in different administrative locations.

This study relied heavily on RCU objectives from the 1969 Goldhammer study. Further research is needed to define more accurately the objectives of RCUs. One suggestion would be a list of open-ended questions with follow-up through the Delphi technique.

In conclusion, now is the time to begin planning for increased work loads and possibly increased staffs. Data presented in this study should provide a perspective for individual RCUs beginning this task. They should also help each SDVE to conceptualize what the state's RCU is capable of and can realistically be expected to do.

The USOE in its continuing search for descriptive information about RCUs should pay particular attention to this study. It presents implications which have the potential of assisting the further development of an even more viable nationwide system of RCUs.